

Amendment to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The telephonic network 14 includes a plurality of media gateways 16. The media gateways form gateways to the packet data network from local networks, of which the local network 118 [[18]] is exemplary. The media gateways perform functions such as protocol translation and voice encoding operations. The specific operations performed by different ones of the media gateways are dependent upon the local networks coupled to the individual ones of the gateways and for which the gateways form gateways to the network 14. In general, the gateways 16 form the access mechanisms by which the telephonic stations of the local networks are able to access the packet data network 14, thereby to permit inter-network communications to be effectuated.